

Army Horse Question Vexing Government Officials

By CHARLES N. LURIE.

When the army men tell us, with solemnly lifted warning hands, that the United States needs horses for its army and must have them if the efficiency of the force is to be maintained the natural reply is: "Well, the government has money in the treasury. Go out and buy horses." But that is not the correct answer, for there are no horses of the proper kind to be bought. At any rate, there is not a sufficient supply of them. This country is rich in many good things, and, as Uncle Joe Cannon remarked a few years ago in profane but expressive language, it's a great big country, but it's poor in horses good for cavalry or artillery service.

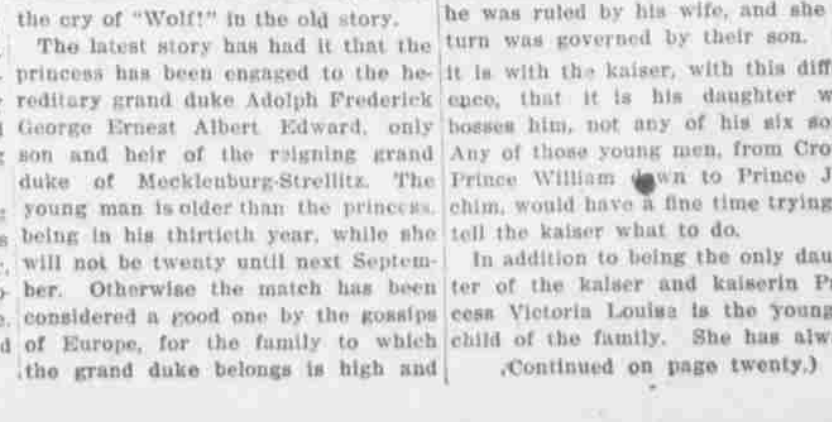
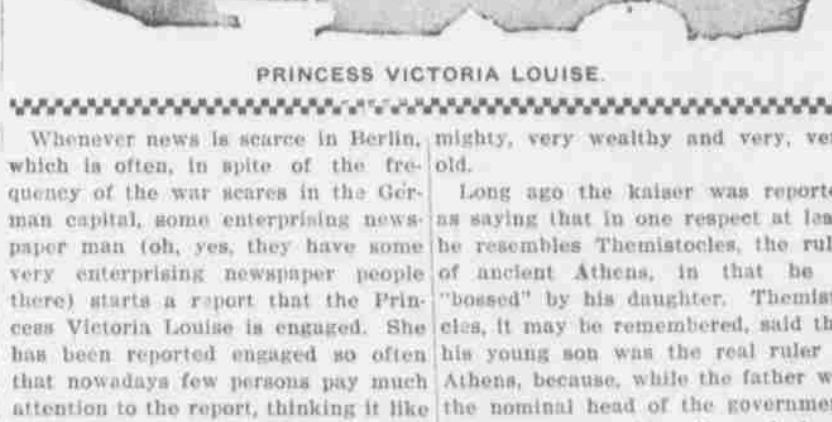
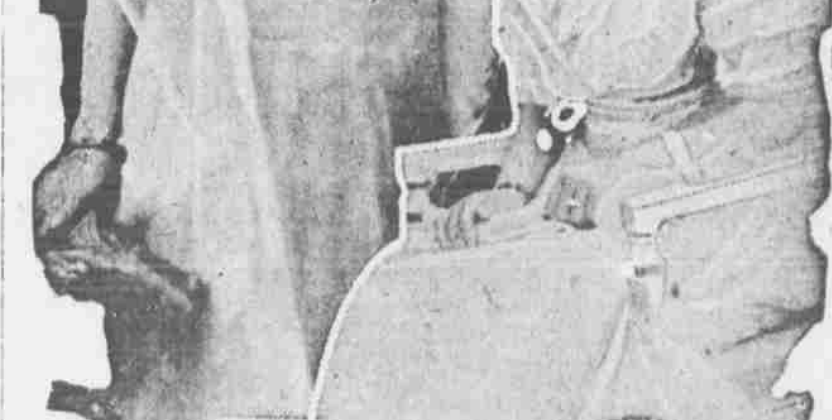
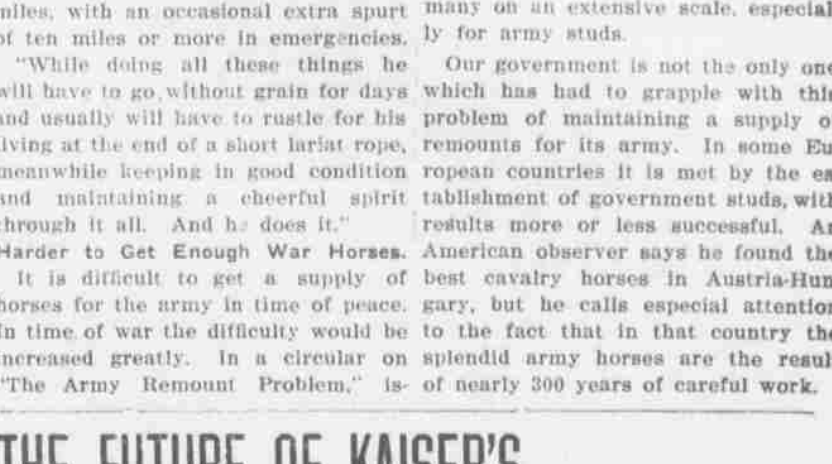
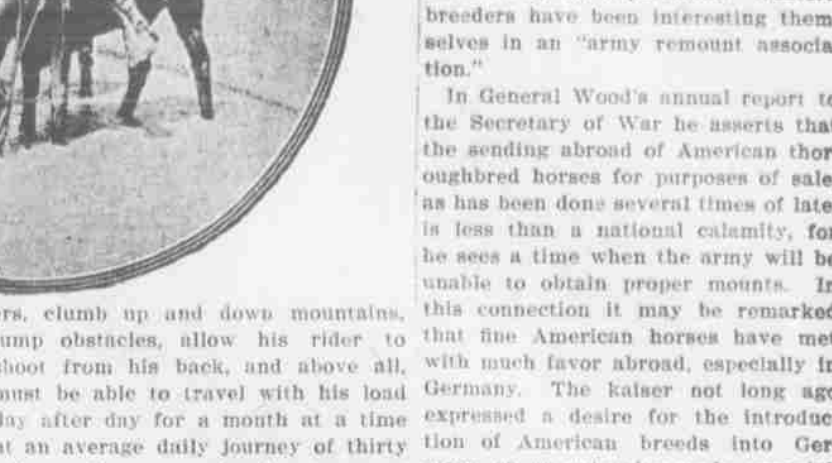
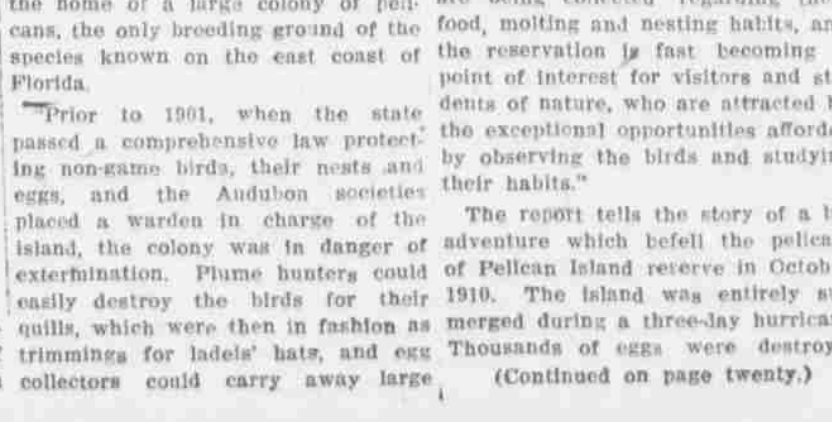
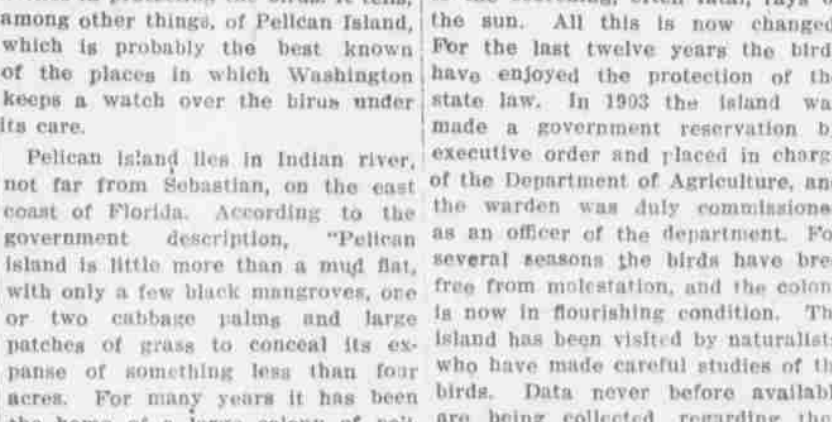
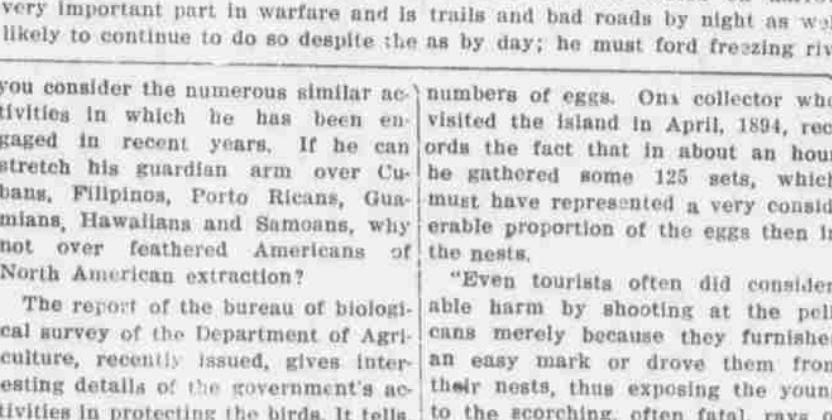
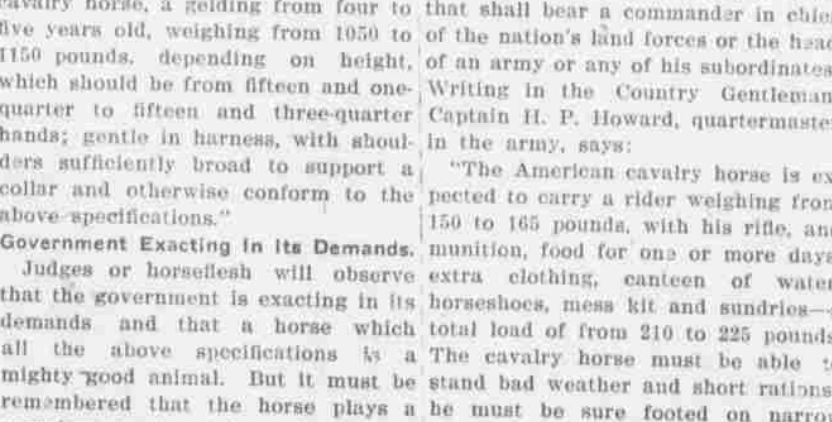
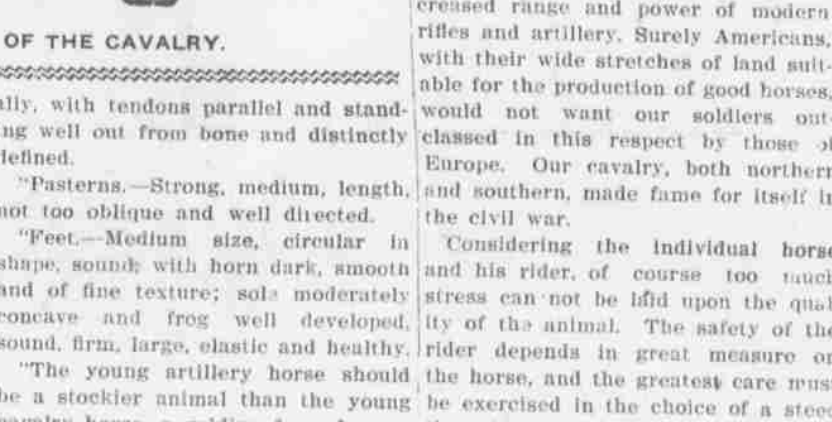
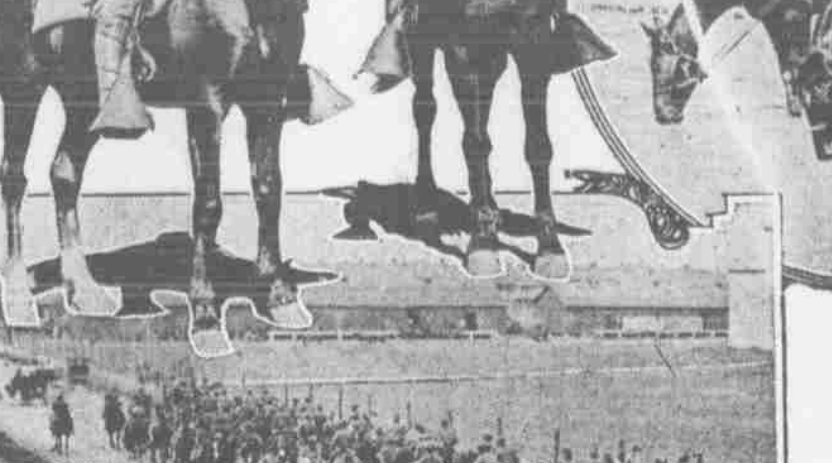
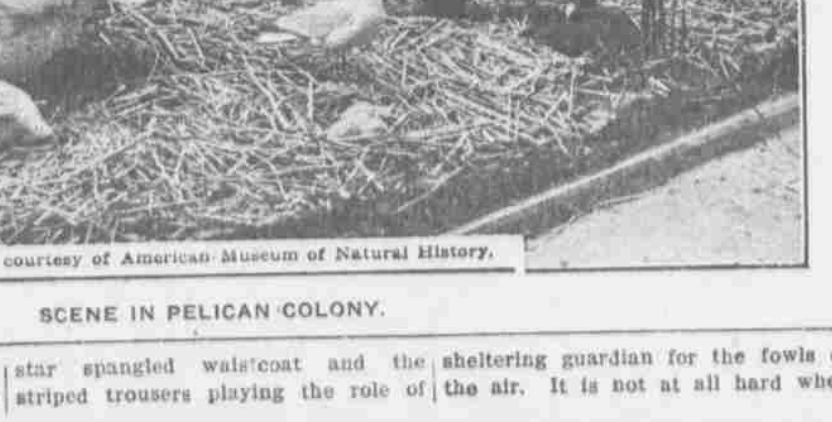
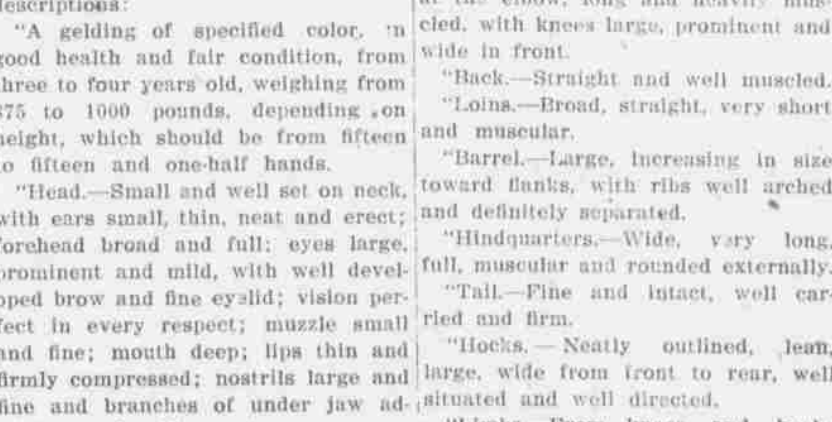
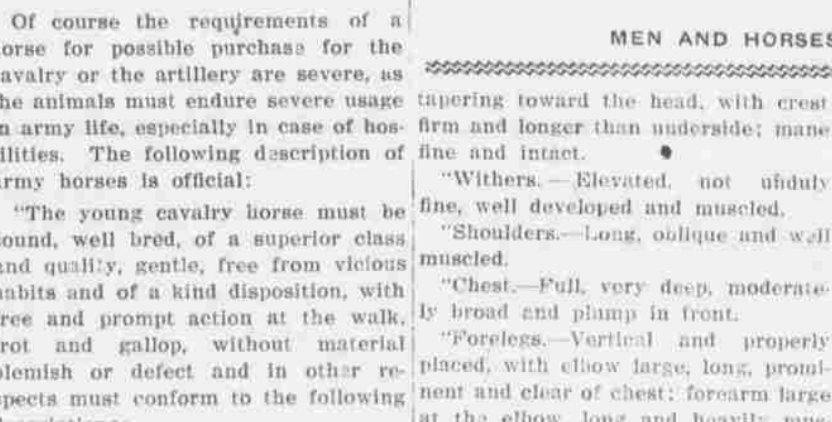
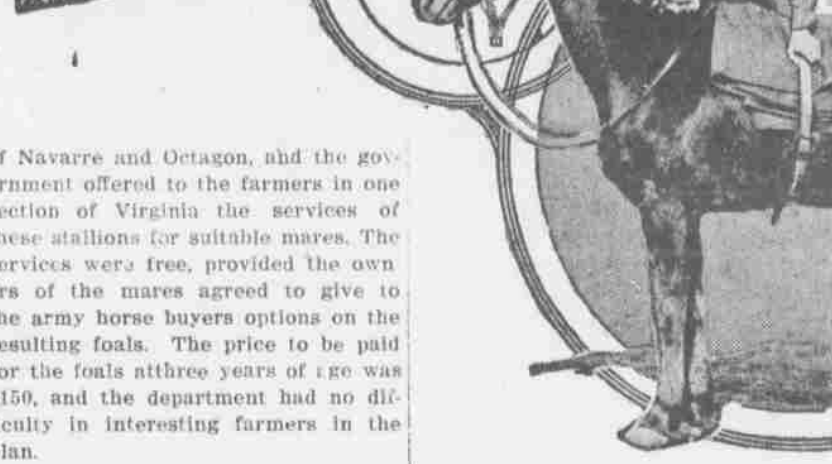
According to recent figures, the army must procure each year 3000 new horses for its service. We have a regular army of 75,000 enlisted men and 4800 officers when the army is on its present peace footing. These men need 23,000 horses, 15,000 for the fifteen cavalry regiments, 4000 for the field artillery and about 1000 for the use of messengers, orderlies, etc. Then there are the 3000 required for mounted officers of the other regiments. It should seem to be an easy matter to get each year 3000 horses for those lost through death or disability, but it is by no means easy, and army officers charged with the solution of the problem are worrying about it. They are appealing to the nation's horse owners and breeders for assistance.

Our Horses Not as Good as Formerly.

Good authorities agree in asserting that the quality of the horses bred and brought to market in this country has deteriorated in the past two or three decades. There is an oversupply of poor horses, for which there is little demand, but a shortage of the better animals which command good prices. The case of the seventy-five horses bought annually by New York City for its mounted policemen is cited. They are animals of the type which makes good cavalry mounts, and they are purchased for almost \$400 each.

The virtual disappearance from American farms and ranges of horses suitable for cavalry and artillery use is attributed to the neglect by breeders of the old and well liked Morgan, standard bred and thoroughbred breeds. The introduction of the big draft horse, favorite nowadays among the men who breed horses as a business, and of the automobile has had the effect of displacing the other types. Now the government, acting through the bureau of animal industry of the department of agriculture, is encouraging interest in the production of horses better fitted for military uses. In this endeavor it has been assisted by some wealthy owners of thoroughbred running horses.

The activities of the racing men have been curtailed by the drastic anti-betting laws of New York and other states. Several months ago August Belmont presented to the government two of his best known stallions, Henry



sued recently by the department of agriculture, George M. Rommel, chief of the animal industry division, says that 50,000 horses would be required by the army and the national guard "before a shot was fired or a saber drawn as against 20,000 horses now in the regular army on a peace basis." Mr. Rommel thinks a satisfactory solution of the problem is found in the encouragement extended to horse breeders by the department. Western breeders have been interesting themselves in an "army remount association."

In General Wood's annual report to the Secretary of War he asserts that the sending abroad of American thoroughbred horses for purposes of sale, as has been done several times of late, is less than a national calamity, for he sees a time when the army will be unable to obtain proper mounts. In this connection it may be remarked that fine American horses have met with much favor abroad, especially in Germany. The Kaiser not long ago expressed a desire for the introduction of American breeds into Germany on an extensive scale, especially for army studs.

Our government is not the only one which has had to grapple with this problem of maintaining a supply of remounts for its army. In some European countries it is met by the establishment of government studs, with results more or less successful. An American observer says he found the best cavalry horses in Austria-Hungary, but he calls special attention to the fact that in that country the increased greatly. In a circular on "The Army Remount Problem," is of nearly 300 years of careful work.

of Navarre and Octagon, and the government offered to the farmers in one section of Virginia the services of these stallions for suitable mares. The services were free, provided the owners of the mares agreed to give to the army horse buyers options on the resulting foals. The price to be paid for the foals at three years of age was \$150, and the department had no difficulty in interesting farmers in the plan.

Of course the requirements of a horse for possible purchase for the cavalry or the artillery are severe, as the animals must endure severe usage in army life, especially in case of hostilities. The following description of army horses is official:

"The young cavalry horse must be sound, well bred, of a superior class and quality, gentle, free from vicious habits and of a kind disposition, with free and prompt action at the walk, trot and gallop, without material blemish or defect and in other respects must conform to the following descriptions:

"A gelding of specified color, in good health and fair condition, from three to four years old, weighing from 875 to 1000 pounds, depending on height, which should be from fifteen to fifteen and one-half hands.

"Head.—Small and well set on neck, with ears small, thin, neat and erect; forehead broad and full; eyes large, prominent and mild, with well developed brow and fine eyelids; vision perfect in every respect; muzzle small and fine; mouth deep; lips thin and firmly compressed; nostrils large and fine and branches of under jaw adjoining neck wide apart.

"Neck.—Light, moderately long and

MEN AND HORSES OF THE CAVALRY.

tapering toward the head, with crest firm and longer than underside; mane fine and intact.

"Withers.—Elevated, not unduly fine, well developed and muscled.

"Shoulders.—Long, oblique and well muscled.

"Chest.—Full, very deep, moderately broad and plump in front.

"Forelegs.—Vertical and properly placed, with elbow large, long, prominent and clear of chest; forearm large at the elbow, long and heavily muscled, with knees large, prominent and wide in front.

"Back.—Straight and well muscled.

"Loins.—Broad, straight, very short and muscular.

"Barrel.—Large, increasing in size toward flanks, with ribs well arched and definitely separated.

"Hindquarters.—Wide, very long, full, muscular and rounded externally.

"Tail.—Fine and intact, well carried and firm.

"Hocks.—Neatly outlined, lean, large, wide from front to rear, well situated and well directed.

"Limbs.—From knees and hocks downward vertical, short, wide later-

ally, with tendons parallel and standing well out from bone and distinctly defined.

"Pasterns.—Strong, medium, length, not too oblique and well directed.

"Feet.—Medium size, circular in shape, sound, with horn dark, smooth and of fine texture; sole moderately concave and frog well developed, sound, firm, large, elastic and healthy.

"The young artillery horse should be a stockier animal than the young cavalry horse, a gelding from four to five years old, weighing from 1050 to 1150 pounds, depending on height, which should be from fifteen and one-quarter to fifteen and three-quarter hands; gentle in harness, with shoulders sufficiently broad to support a collar and otherwise conform to the above specifications."

Government Exacting in Its Demands.

Judges or horseflesh will observe that the government is exacting in its demands and that a horse which all the above specifications is a mighty good animal. But it must be remembered that the horse plays a very important part in warfare and is likely to continue to do so despite the

success which has been achieved by the aeroplane in the fighting in Tripoli. Cavalry operations still have places in the books of the tacticians, even in view of the enormously increased range and power of modern rifles and artillery. Surely Americans, with their wide stretches of land suitable for the production of good horses, would not want our soldiers outclassed in this respect by those of Europe. Our cavalry, both northern and southern, made fame for itself in the civil war.

Considering the individual horse and his rider, of course too much stress can not be laid upon the quality of the animal. The safety of the rider depends in great measure on the horse, and the greatest care must be exercised in the choice of a steed that shall bear a commander in chief of the nation's land forces or the head of an army or any of his subordinates. Writing in the Country Gentleman, Captain H. P. Howard, quartermaster in the army, says:

"The American cavalry horse is expected to carry a rider weighing from 150 to 165 pounds, with his rifle, ammunition, food for one or more days, extra clothing, canteen of water, horsehoes, mess kit and sundries—a total load of from 210 to 225 pounds. The cavalry horse must be able to stand bad weather and short rations; he must be sure footed on narrow trails and bad roads by night as well as by day; he must ford freezing riv-

THE FUTURE OF KAISER'S DAUGHTER INTERESTS EUROPE



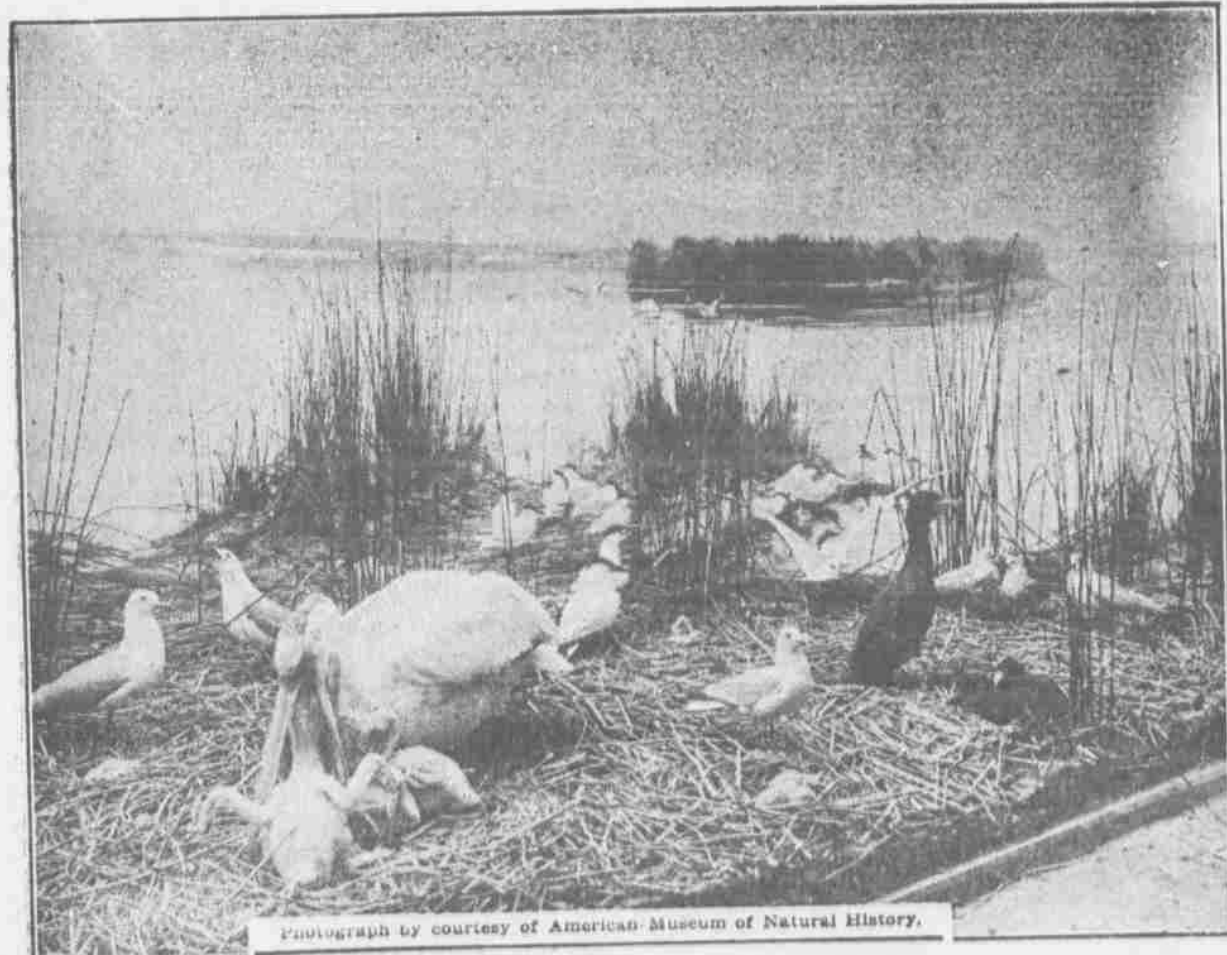
PRINCESS VICTORIA LOUISE.

Whenever news is scarce in Berlin, mighty, very wealthy and very, very old.

Long ago the Kaiser was reported as saying that in one respect at least he resembles Themistocles, the ruler of ancient Athens, in that he is "bossed" by his daughter, Victoria Louise. It may be remembered, said that his young son was the real ruler of Athens, because, while the father was the nominal head of the government, he was ruled by his wife, and she in turn was governed by their son. So it is with the Kaiser, with this difference, that it is his daughter who bosses him, not any of his six sons. Any of those young men, from Crown Prince William down to Prince Joachim, would have a fine time trying to tell the Kaiser what to do.

In addition to being the only daughter of the Kaiser and Kaiserin, Princess Victoria Louise is the youngest child of the family. She has always (Continued on page twenty.)

Uncle Sam's Care of His Feathered Friends



SCENE IN PELICAN COLONY.

you consider the numerous similar activities in which he has been engaged in recent years. If he can stretch his guardian arm over Cubans, Filipinos, Porto Ricans, Guamanians, Hawaiians and Samoans, why not over feathered Americans of North American extraction?

The report of the bureau of biological survey of the Department of Agriculture, recently issued, gives interesting details of the government's activities in protecting the birds. It tells, among other things, of Pelican Island, which is probably the best known of the places in which Washington keeps a watch over the birds under its care.

Pelican Island lies in Indian river, not far from Sebastian, on the east coast of Florida. According to the government description, "Pelican Island is little more than a mud flat, with only a few black mangroves, one or two cabbage palms and large patches of grass to conceal its expanse of something less than four acres. For many years it has been the home of a large colony of pelicans, the only breeding ground of the species known on the east coast of Florida.

Prior to 1901, when the state passed a comprehensive law protecting non-game birds, their nests and eggs, and the Audubon societies placed a warden in charge of the island, the colony was in danger of extermination. Plume hunters could easily destroy the birds for their quills, which were then in fashion as trimmings for ladies' hats, and egg collectors could carry away large

numbers of eggs. One collector who visited the island in April, 1894, records the fact that in about an hour he gathered some 125 sets, which must have represented a very considerable proportion of the eggs then in the nests.

"Even tourists often did considerable harm by shooting at the pelicans merely because they furnished an easy mark or drove them from their nests, thus exposing the young to the scorching, often fatal, rays of the sun. All this is now changed. For the last twelve years the birds have enjoyed the protection of the state law. In 1903 the island was made a government reservation by executive order and placed in charge of the Department of Agriculture, and the warden was duly commissioned as an officer of the department. For several seasons the birds have bred free from molestation, and the colony is now in flourishing condition. The island has been visited by naturalists, who have made careful studies of the birds. Data never before available are being collected regarding their food, molting and nesting habits, and the reservation is fast becoming a point of interest for visitors and students of nature, who are attracted by the exceptional opportunities afforded by observing the birds and studying their habits."

The report tells the story of a big adventure which befell the pelicans of Pelican Island reserve in October, 1910. The island was entirely submerged during a three-day hurricane. Thousands of eggs were destroyed (Continued on page twenty.)

Uncle Sam, bird protector! Just imagine the old man in the

star spangled waistcoat and the striped trousers playing the role of the

sheltering guardian for the fowls of the air. It is not at all hard when